

# 74-year-old man wages war against 'anti-bicyclers'

By CARL STODDARD

Joseph Williams, 74, is waging a one-man campaign against a federal and state bureaucracy which he says is denying the use of public right-of-ways to bicycle riders.

Williams, in a series of letters to transportation officials, maintains that roads and freeways are right-of-ways open to everyone, not just those driving motorized vehicles.

Although he lives in Birmingham, Williams has taken aim at two heavily-traveled intersections in Southfield: the Nine Mile and Southfield roads interchange, and the Telegraph Road and 1-96 interchange.

Both of these interchanges, he points out, are only designed for motorized vehicles. Bicycles and pedestrians don't stand a chance on these interchanges, he says, and maintains that such "conditions are unconstitutional."

He said that according to Michigan Compiled Law, 1970, a roadway "is public way for the use of (the) public in general for passage of traffic without distinction."

A letter he received from Donald Orme, engineer of traffic safety for the state department of highways, said that "even if the space were there, the high speeds and the free flow ramps would not allow a safe vehicle and bicycle mix."

Complained Williams: "He's drawing a line in his mind."

WILLIAMS SAID that what the state is doing is make a distinction between motorized traffic and bicycle or pedestrian traffic. An avid bicyclist, Williams sees this distinction as discrimination.

He has fired off a series of letters to the state highway commission, the Southeast Michigan Council of governments (SEMCOG), and federal transportation officials.

"Everybody has the same rights to the roadways," he said. And just to prove it, he took his bicycle down Telegraph Road, past the Tel-Twelve Mall and through the Northwestern Highway-1-96 interchange.

"In addition to directional and merging lanes serving the interchange with 1-96 and Northwestern, the development of the area has resulted in a multiplicity of left-turn, right-turn, cross-overs and intersecting lanes with as many as six lanes in parallel and more being added," he said in a letter to the highway department.

He said there are no provisions for pedestrians going north or south through any part of the intersection.

He added: "It should be recommended that US-24 (Telegraph Road) is a general purpose highway, not a limited access highway, and the provisions must be those which will serve

a wide range of highway users, including pedestrians."

HIS BICYCLE trip through the intersection proved to him that his contentions were right.

"I made it," he said, "but you should have heard those guys with their horns."

Although he started out in the far right hand lane going south on Telegraph Road, he said, by time he got past the interchange Williams found that the lane was the fourth lane over from the right. He didn't find that a very comfortable position.

Traveling south on Southfield Road has also proved hazardous and time consuming for Williams.

A MAP provided him by the highway people suggested the best route to travel south on Southfield Road by bicycle to get to Nine Mile Road. The route suggested, he said, took him more than a mile out of his way, weaving him along service drives and secondary roads.

Williams suggested that a bicycle path could be built along the highway's berm, reducing the path to less than one half of a mile. So far, he has had no takers.

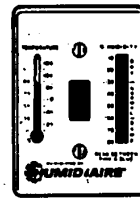
## Students win Hopwood contest

SOUTHFIELD—Two Southfield residents were recipients of awards in the second annual freshman composition Hopwood contest at the University of Michigan.

Susan DeMara received a \$50 prize for her composition.

Jeffrey Weinfield received a \$50 prize for his composition, "In Trouble? Just Get Sick!"

The awards were presented in the Rackham Amphitheater after a lecture by George Garrett, poet, novelist, and editor.



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## Board rejects lettuce boycott

SOUTHFIELD—A lettuce boycott in the Southfield schools may continue, but it will do so without the official support of the Board of Education.

On Jan. 14 the board was asked by Bryan Medwed, a senior at Southfield-Lathrup High School and a representative of the student congress, to boycott Teamster-picked head lettuce.

After two weeks of consideration, board member Robert Schwarz urged the board not to join in the boycott. Schwarz said he was impressed with the student involvement in the boycott and could personally support such a boycott.

Schwarz said, however, that he did not feel the board of education should be involved in boycotts. He said the board should concern itself with the quality of education and suggested that if the students were concerned about the problems of lettuce workers that they consider an alternative form of action.

Schwarz's proposal to restrict the board from involvement in the boycott was approved 7-0 by the board at the Jan. 23 meeting.

The action came as a surprise to some students. The Southfield-Lathrup High School newspaper, Dimensions,

had predicted that the board would support the boycott. But some students apparently mistook the board's willingness to consider the boycott as acceptance.

The lettuce issue was unexpectedly brought to the board more than two weeks ago. Medwed told the board he and several other students, who are affiliated with the United Farm Workers of America, circulated a petition in the schools asking that UFW lettuce be used by the district rather than Teamster lettuce.

The petition was signed by more than 300 persons, including students, teachers and administrators.

Medwed later brought the petition to the student congress and was appointed to head a group studying the boycott. On Jan. 13, the student congress passed a resolution calling for the removal of Teamster lettuce from school cafeterias. They suggested replacing the lettuce with UFW lettuce or leaf, romano or escarole lettuce.

According to the student petition, the 1972 California Supreme Court was quoted as saying that lettuce growers conspired with officials of the Teamsters to keep UFW out of California.

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